1: Herskovits E-4, 6 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

ship of a very intelligent mulatto named Bauvais" gained some successes "over the undisciplined forces in Port-au-Prince" and forced the inhabitants of the capital to recognize the power of this group by entering into a definite treaty with them.[7]

There are other indications that life in the valley did not fail to reflect the discontent of the black slaves. Writing in 1830, Mackenzie, who was the first British Consul-General to the Haitian Republic, remarked:

> "It is said by some of the best informed Haitians, that among the mountains that stretch from the neighbourhood of Mirebalais to the coast on the east of Jacmel, there is an extensive association of the descendants of the Maroon negroes, whose independence had been recognised long before the revolution by the then existing government."[8]

It is thus apparent that the institution of *marronage*, whereby runaway slaves established themselves in the mountains, in many instances living for years beyond the reach of capture and free from attack, was known in Mirebalais as it was elsewhere. Mirebalais was also not without contact with the great heroes of Haitian history. Toussaint L'Ouverture conquered and lost the town several times before it became a strategic point "from which his lieutenants, Dessalines and Christophe, menaced Arcahaie and the plain of the Cul-de-Sac."[9]

If but little has been recorded concerning Mirebalais before Haitian independence, even less is known of its later history. Mackenzie, reporting the population of Haiti district by district, gives that of Mirebalais in 1802 as 53,649; but in 1825 as only 16,037.[10] Whether the region included under the term "Mirebalais" differed at the two periods, or whether the hardships resulting from the internal strife that racked Haiti after independence had been gained took a toll of the size suggested by these figures cannot be said. That Mirebalais was an

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

important point in the warfare between the northern Empire of Christophe and the southern Republic of Pétion is well known, since the boundary between the two, never definitely fixed, might be roughly considered as the Artibonite, control of which, as always, depended on also obtaining control of the strategic hills about the town.[11] It is not possible to discover more than approximate figures for the population of Mirebalais at the present time, since no census of the district has been made, and the most recent figure of 51,000 for the commune is derived from the baptismal records in the parish church.[12]

From the earliest years of settlement of the valley, the town has been the center of its life. The government of the commune is located here; here the courts sit; and here the best schools and the only church of the district are found. Yet it is a small town, numbering less then two hundred and fifty houses, and crossed by but three principal thoroughfares stretching north and south, with ten or twelve cross-lanes. The houses on the principal streets, rectangular and small, are built of wood, plastered over with clay, painted, and roofed with sheet iron. On the outskirts of the town the roofing is of straw, or banana-leaf thatch, while the walls themselves are made of twilled wythes. No house lacks its veranda, however small, where people may be seen sitting late of an afternoon and early in the evening, but the life of the women is lived chiefly in the courtyards behind these houses that line the streets, where the cookhouses are found and the storehouses, and where all work is done. The *place*, or town square, lies at the point where the principal route between Port-au-Prince and the Dominican border turns sharply to the east. Consisting of an acre or two of cleared land, it is overgrown with weeds except when, in preparing for festive occasions, the prisoners from the town jail may be seen spending long hours, machetes in hand, cutting the grass, a few blades at a time. North of the square stands the church, a substan-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

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CHAPTER I

THE AFRICAN HERITAGE

For the study of a civilization like that of Haiti, which is the result of close and continued contact between peoples with traditions as dissimilar as those of Europe and Africa, a peculiarly lively sense of time depth is needed. Yet though it has been repeatedly stated that Haiti is the child of Africa and France, even those who proclaim this emphatically fail too often to recognize the need for as detailed a knowledge as is possible of how the strands of history were woven into the fabric of Haitian cultural life. It is for this reason that before any description of the culture of Mirebalais can be attempted, not only must the names of the African tribes from which the Haitians were derived be given, but the broad characteristics of their cultures must be considered and, where possible, the classes of their population from which were derived the Negroes who were brought to Haiti. In addition, the importance of knowing the types of Frenchmen who migrated to the island during its colonial period and of understanding the modes of life they followed and presented to their slaves must be viewed as of the first order, while, finally, the manner in which these two sets of traditions were eventually forged into the structure of Haitian life as seen today must be analyzed if more than a superficial glimpse of this life is to result.

Writing in 1730, a Jesuit priest named Pierre François

121
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1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

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Xavier de Charlevoix [1] designated the following varieties of slaves found on the island: the *Sénégallois*, who are "of all the Negroes the best fashioned, the easiest to discipline, and the most adapted for domestic service"; the *Bambaras*, "tallest of all, but thieves"; the *Arudas*, "those who know agriculture best, but who are the proudest"; the *Congos*, "the smallest and the most apt at fishing," but who were most prone to desert their masters; the *Nagos*, "the most human"; the *Mondougos*, "the most cruel"; the *Mines*, "the most resolute, the most capricious, and the most subject to despair of themselves."

St. Mery, the importance of whose work has already been mentioned, gives a more detailed list than that of Charlevoix.[2] Of slaves who came from tribes living in the northern part of West Africa he names the *Sénégalais*, *Yoloffes*, and *Foules*, the *Bambaras*, *Quiambas*, *Mandingues*, and *Soses*, as well as Negroes from the Bissagot Islands, though the last two categories are reported as but sparsely represented in the colony of Santo Domingo. Following the coast of Africa round its great bend, he speaks of the *Bouriquis* and the *Mesurades*, or *Cangas*, as deriving from the region between Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, while he notes the *Arudas*, the *Caplaous*, the *Mines*, the *Agoues*, the *Socos*, and the *Fantins*, as coming from the area between Cape Appolonia and the Volta River, an area whose tribes made substantial contributions to the Haitian slave population. Farther east, from what was known as the "slave coast" and today comprises Togoland, Dahomey, and western Nigeria, were brought the *Cotocolis*, "who inhabit the kingdom of *Coto*," the *Popos*, the *Fidas*, and the *Ardras;* while from the interior of the west coast the *Fonds*, the *Mais*, the *Aoussas*, the *Ibos*, and the *Nagos* are mentioned. Slaves from Benin, in the Niger Delta, as well as the *Mokos* and other tribes of Calabar, were also present in Haiti, though again in small numbers. The basin of the Congo River, how-

J. Herskovits E-4, 8 (1936) 1937 SV3 Hait SV3

ever, contributed not only many slaves called by the name of that river, but also the *Mayombés*, the *Mousombés*, and the *Mondongues*, though the "true Congus" — the *Franc-Congus* — are listed as having been derived from Angola. As for the rest of the continent, "One does not see at all in Santo Domingo any Africans who have come from the remainder of the west coast of Africa, which ends at the Cape of Good Hope. . . ."[8]

No final answer can be given about the extent to which these lists of tribal names may be regarded as valid, but the unanimity with which not only Charlevoix and St. Mery, but such other contemporary observers as Bryan Edwards for Jamaica, the Reverend C. G. A. Oldendorp for the Virgin Islands, John G. Stedman and Jan Jacob Hartsinck for Guiana — to name only four — recorded similar African regions and similar tribal names when writing of the slaves of other parts of the New World, offers strong corroborative testimony. Moreover, the fact that every tribal designation given in the lists of Charlevoix and St. Mery can be found on present-day maps of Africa in the approximate region they had indicated confirms the accuracy of these early lists.

The characteristics of the various types of Negroes recorded by Charlevoix and St. Mery are not without interest. The Senegalese are described as tall and well made, and *of* an ebony color, their noses almost as straight as those of whites, *their hair less tightly curled than that of other Negroes. They* had the reputation of possessing a superior morality and were deemed warrior-like. St. Mery had nothing but the highest praise for the Senegalese slave.

> "He is a farmer, intelligent, good, faithful even in love, understanding, and makes an excellent domestic. Living on millet, maize, and rice, he is very sober, excellent in caring for animals, discreet, and above all taciturn, a quality sufficiently rare among the Africans and

Ia Herskovits E-4, 8 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

which one does not find often enough even among civilized peoples."

Not all of the Mohammedan slaves, however, had the desirable qualities of the Senegalese. The Bambara, for example, were depicted as insolent and not always to be trusted, as the designations "those who steal turkeys" and "those who steal sheep" would seem to indicate.

The people between Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast were known as a hardy group prone to revolt and desertion; they were not held desirable as slaves, and thus it is not strange that few of them were found in the colony. A similar appraisal was made of the Gold Coast Negroes, for while they were described as generally well made and intelligent, they were also assessed as unreliable, deceitful, lazy, given to flattery, great consumers of food, drunkards, and wantons. And as for the Fanti and the Mina, they were spoken of as "extremely proud, waging constant warfare, capricious, and ready at any time to commit suicide."

The Negroes of the Slave Coast were favorites in Santo Domingo. Their characteristic lighter skin-color, to be observed at the present time in their peculiar yellowish or reddish hue, confirms their provenience. They were thought intelligent but avaricious, and were designated as "eaters of dogs." The Ardra women, "continuous talkers," and quarrelsome, were rarely employed as domestics, since the Negroes from the region of Dahomey apparently learned French with the greatest of difficulty, so that to understand their speech was considered to be the greatest test "for those who flatter themselves that they have command of Créole."

The Ibos were found excellent for work in the fields, yet difficult to manage, for the slightest fault-finding or ridicule caused them to commit suicide,

"the idea of which, far from terrifying them, seems to hold an attraction for them, for they believe in the trans-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

> migration of souls. Too often it has come about that the *Ibos* of a given plantation have agreed all to hang themselves, in order to return to their country."

So well recognized was this tendency of the Ibo slaves to commit suicide, that they were described in Créole by the formula: "*Ibos pend' cor' a yo*—The Ibòs (are those who) hang themselves." None the less, many slaves from this tribe were acquired. Their strong communal and tribal ties made it advantageous for those who owned them to obtain more of them, since newcomers "were accorded help, care, and instruction by those who had preceded them."

According to St. Mery, the Negroes most common in the colony came from the Congo coast and Angola, and were known by the generic term *Congos*. The *Franc-Congos*, who came from the kingdoms of Congo and Angola, were

> "of a docility and gayety that makes them much desired. Loving song, dance, and ornaments, they make excellent domestics, while their intelligence, their facility in speaking a pure Créole, their jovial countenances without markings . . . cause people to prefer them for house-servants; they also make good laborers and good fishermen."

That the large numbers of Congo Negroes imported into Haiti have left no more of the elements of their culture in the island than are found is perhaps due to this very devotion to their masters, for a lively tradition of the present tells how, during the slave revolts, the Congo Negroes most often remained on the side of their masters and most often betrayed their fellows.

Not all the Negroes from the Congo area were as amiable as these just mentioned. The *Mondongos* had "the most execrable excess of eating their fellows." This quotation gains special significance because of the prominence which it has

1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

been given through its use to substantiate the many charges of cannibalism in Haiti that have been made. Yet those who, desirous of establishing such cannibalism, quote this passage from St. Mery do not always remember to quote it in its complete context:

> "Some of these butchers of human flesh are also brought to Santo Domingo . . . where, as in Africa, they are the horror of the other Negroes, notably of the Congos, who, because of their nearness to them [in Africa], are most exposed to their cruelties." [6]

These are thus the tribes who were presumably the most important in the Negro ancestry of the Haitians of today. Was there any least common denominator in language which made it possible for slaves fresh from Africa to communicate with one another after their arrival in Haiti? Was there sufficient similarity in their cultures so that this might form the basis for a retention of African beliefs and behavior despite the vicissitudes of slavery? And what were the characteristics of the African civilizations of these people?

The picture of West African life, as it is commonly drawn, emphasizes the great number of small tribal groups following dissimilar modes of life, speaking mutually unintelligible languages, and worshipping different gods. In a very general sense this is not untrue. On the face of it, the number of languages that are spoken in the area from which the slaves were derived would seem to have constituted an effective barrier not alone to any concerted action on the part of slaves, but even to communication between them, especially since in many regions of the New World it was a fixed policy to separate slaves from the same tribe.

Yet behind this semblance of sharp dissimilarities lies a basic unity of language and culture in all of West Africa, so that though languages were and are mutually unintelligible, structurally and idiomatically they are much the same. This

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

CHAPTER II

WHAT THE SLAVES FOUND IN HAITI

Though by the time of the French Revolution "the immense army of slavery had increased to such proportions that in the face of it the white world seemed reduced to a mere handful of men,"[1] this was by no means the case in the earliest days of the colony of Santo Domingo. As late as 1681 the whites outnumbered the Negroes almost three to one,[2] and it is not until a hundred years later that, in the words of St. Mery, there were "eleven and three tenths slaves for one white."[3]

Yet in the fashioning of the present-day culture of the Haitian peasants, this "mere handful" exerted an influence out of all proportion to its size. That this should have occurred is not strange in view of the relationship between Negroes and whites, which was that between slaves and masters; that it did occur is amply shown in the contemporary accounts of Haitian and West Indian life, which tell us how the Negroes everywhere made conscious efforts to achieve the standards of those who to them represented power, wealth, and position. But while the prestige of the master-class must be acknowledged, care must be taken not to accept uncritically an assumption that has colored many accounts of the lives of primitive peoples who have come into contact with European

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

in descent, so there were "colored" folk who were slaves. As time went on, the lighter-colored slaves were usually employed as house-servants rather than field-hands, bringing about a continuous dilution of the Negro blood that flowed in these strains, and a lightening of their skins. And such was the prestige attached to light color that the mixed-bloods, even though slaves, felt themselves superior to free Negroes of undiluted African stock. This attitude derived from the fact that the lighter slaves were most often manumitted, particularly if they were the children of their owners, and that in other situations, when as slaves they gained the favor of their masters, they were permitted to engage in some remunerative enterprise with the proceeds of which they eventually might purchase their own freedom. These free people of color, or *affranchis*, formed an important part of the Haitian population in pre-Revolutionary times,[13] and played a principal role in the development of Haitian culture. It was through them that European civilization flowed, since because of the closeness of their contacts with the whites they were the instrument by means of which the aboriginal African heritage of the slaves was modified to produce the forms in which it is found in Haiti today.[14]

Yet for all the importance of the freed mixed-bloods in the attainment of Haitian independence and in the fixing of the patterns of Haitian culture, they, like the whites, were but relatively few in number, their strength being but from five to ten per cent of that of slaves.[15] In attempting to analyze the manner in which the present amalgam that is the civilization of Haiti was formed, it is consequently necessary to revert to a consideration of those who were in the majority, the full-blooded Negroes. The tribes from which these Negroes were principally derived have been indicated, together with the outlines of the civilizations of the region of Africa from which they were drawn. To this must be added, as has been for the whites with whom they came in contact, an analysis of the so-

1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

cial classes to which they belonged, as well as the circumstances of their enslavement, their treatment in Africa before shipment to the New World and during the voyage, their initiation into their new mode of life, and the manner in which they lived as slaves, since all of these facts had considerable bearing on the processes which shaped the behavior of their descendants who now inhabit the island.

The integrated political organization of West Africa has been described, as well as the important fact that the class stratification in that region was almost as fixed and its social implications almost as far-reaching as in France. Even the early writers recognized that not all slaves came from the same ranks of society, just as they understood that there were various ways in which enslavement could be achieved. Père Labat, who lived in the West Indies for many years, listed four classes from which slaves were drawn. First, he says, were those whose punishments against native law had been commuted to perpetual banishment — that is, to slavery "for the private profit of the kings"; second were the prisoners of war; third were those who, already the slaves of native princes or of those persons to whom they had been given by these princes, were sold to meet the need of their masters for money; while fourth, comprising the greatest proportion of the slaves, were those snatched from their homes by the marauding hands of robbers who, with the connivance of native rulers, carried on these raids to satisfy the demands of the European dealers.[14] This classification and others of the period, though generally accepted and repeated by later writers, tells little concerning the ranks of society from which the slaves were drawn, except as this may be inferred. For this one must go to present-day West Africa, where a lively tradition of the slave-trade has survived and offers valuable supplementary information.[15]

In the light of the existing traditions in Dahomey and Nigeria, it is evident that from the point of view of the African, Labat's four classes must be compressed into two — the

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV2 Haiti SV2

"The Mina Negroes have even been seen to recognize princes of their country . . . prostrating themselves at their feet and rendering them that homage whose contrast to the state of servitude to which these princes have been reduced in the colony offers a striking enough instance of the instability of human greatness."[11]

Yet another group of Africans played a significant role in determining the trends Haitian Negro culture was to take. It is a commonplace among those who have studied New World Negro life that African religion has shown greater resistance to white influence than any other phase of African culture. And to explain this one must again turn to native African tradition. The beginnings of the West African monarchies, whose ruling dynasties eventually came to command great stretches of land, were in tiny principalities that continually "warred" against each other. Tradition has it that the most intransigent of the conquered were the priests of the indigenous local cults, who, because of their activities, were punished with what native idiom still terms "banishment." In the New World these intractable priests continued their rites for their fellow-slaves and instructed the next generation so their knowledge would not be lost to the people. Before their enslavement they had been men of power and influence, and this pattern, carried over in all its strength in the New World, continued them and their descendants as natural leaders. Hence, wherever the opportunity presented itself to strike for liberty, they invoked the spiritual forces to reinforce the power and courage of the military leaders who, like them, had been sold into slavery because their countries had been conquered, or because they had rebelled against the succession in their own lands.

The composition of the slave population as inferred from these traditions is thus seen to be somewhat different from

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

that commonly assumed, since the conclusion is inescapable that, if anything, the slaves formed a group whose aboriginal types showed a weighting on the upper end of the African social scale rather than an overwhelming proportion of the less desirable members of society. Such an assumption goes far in explaining how the "slave psychology" generally attributed to Negroes of the New World was anything but a real part of their inner lives, and makes as well for an understanding of the extent to which the Negroes suffered their slavery with a constantly active discontent that is rarely given proper recognition in the study of the history of the period, and to which the drive toward freedom and the traditions of their native land were kept alive despite the restraints imposed by the masters.

Once in the net of the slavers, however, the status of any individual mattered but little, for to the European dealers each Negro was but an added unit of cargo. All last traces of his dignity as a human being were taken from him;[14] in the grants for earlier slaving operations, and in the manifests of the ships of that time, slaves were not even invoiced as human beings, but as "pieces of the Indies" — fractions of the perfect slave, who was conceived as having a height of seven quarters of a little more than ten inches each. Under this practice, the stature of each slave, child or adult, having been recorded, the total length of the members of the cargo was divided by the requisite number, and thus reduced to so many of these "pieces of the Indies," the actual number of human beings in the cargo not figuring.[15]

It is unnecessary to detail the horrors of the passage to the New World, for the story has been too often told. One can but conjecture what its effect on those subjected to it must have been, especially when it is viewed as an introduction to their contact with the Europeans who were to be their masters. That the mortality on the voyage was high is well known, but death encountered while the shackled slaves passed the dan-

1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

the phrase: "This is natural." Children are not spaced, for normally a man resumes intercourse with his wife the second or third month after childbirth. Except for the drinking of coconut milk and salt, which is believed to be effective in preventing conception if taken before intercourse, contraceptives are not known to women, which means that pregnancies follow in rapid succession. Families are not too large, however, despite this, those numbering seven or eight children being rare, even in the hills. The reason for this is a high incidence of infant mortality, which is obvious despite the absence of vital statistics. Abortions are usually resorted to by young women, who sustain the operation done by the uncertain skill of an old woman, in the fear that bearing a child will later stand in the way of a desirable legal marriage. Some men, however, take the precaution of placing a grain of native salt on the tongue while having intercourse during an illicit affair, believing that this will be effective in preventing conception.

A childless woman first goes to a *vodun* priest, to have him determine by divination if a co-wife has not invoked magic against her. If her question receives an affirmative answer, she acquires a "counter-charm" to offset the effect of the other woman's magic. Should such a charm be ineffective, she would offer her prayers before the shrines of the saints and make pilgrimages to such sacred places as Saut d'Eau, there phrasing her petition to the Virgin in some manner such as the prayer overheard as a woman lighted a candle and held it in her hand before placing it on a sacred rock:

"Vièrge Miracles, Manman, voilà, depuis six ans depuis qui moins marié; moin apé viève seul avec pauvre malheureux moin-a. Ça fait trois fois moin vini nan pié ou. Pas 'blié mandé moin fait ou, pour charité, moin ou petit pitite. Moin va minnin li ba ou. Moin apé parti, Manman, s' ou' plì, songé ça pitite m' mandé ou.—

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

d'Angole) is obviously Angola, while the designations Iho and Congo speak for themselves. Simbi is a Congo deity, as are Bumba and Lemba. Finally, in the categories of gods important in the regions of Haiti other than Mirebalais are the Loa Sénégal, and the Loa Mondong, both of which are names of African tribes mentioned in the early literature as contributing to the Haitian slave population. But all recognition of geographical names as such has disappeared, and they have been transmuted into designations of gods.

Outstanding here is the word *vodun* itself, already indicated as Dahomean, where it is a general term for "deity," though in Haiti its use has become more restricted and the symbol for deity has become the word *loa*, or *mystère*. The origin of the designation *loa*, which has been claimed to be a corruption of the French *roi*, is debatable. It is true that in West Africa certain deities are regarded as kings, yet this derivation is not convincing in view of the fact that in the *vodun* cult as found in Haiti at present or as described in earlier sources the *loa* are never generally referred to as kings, something that tends to strengthen statements that have been made to the effect that the word comes from the language of a Congo tribe.[1] The source of the root *hun-*, which figures in the terms *hungan*, *hunsi*, and *humfort*, is clear, for in Dahomey it is a synonym for the word *vodun*. *Hungan* and *hunsi* are even more definitely traceable than *humfort*, since the ending *-gan*, the Dahomean word for chief, designates the priest as the chief of the spirits, and *-si*, "wife," is employed in the sense of "wife of the god" or his devotee, in Africa as in Haiti. The female counterpart of *hungan*, *mambu*, cannot be definitely assigned, but may be of Bantu derivation, and is certainly an African word.

Other uncontaminated Africanisms can be discerned in the attitude of the Haitians toward the *loa* and in the ceremonies for them. One of the most characteristic is the inheritance of *loa* in families, a direct survival of the belief which not only

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

175
569

"surplus" stock. The African's motives sometimes were political rather then mercenary—to weaken and disperse unfriendly neighboring tribes. Occasionally, members of a royal family, possible contenders for tribal power and all the prerogatives that went along with it, were "exiled" in this extremely effective and final way. Although Africans were the victims of this monstrous commerce, it is clear that without the participation and coöperation of other Africans the slave trade as it existed in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries would not have been possible. The African, along with the Asian and the European, shares the guilt for the indecencies and degradation that grow out of human barter.

The voyage to the New World was at best horrible and inhuman. Nothing that can be said about the manner in which the captains of the slavers attempted to care for their cargoes can change the picture. The slaves suffered from thirst, disease, hunger, seasickness, and impersonal brutality. The anxiety and dread which these captives must have suffered in anticipation of things to come are difficult to imagine. A strange, unfamiliar world awaited them across an ocean larger than Africa itself. Some slaves killed themselves. Others who had survived long overland marches died of exhaustion or disease aboard the slave vessels. And many a slaver had to report in its log that a number of chained males, taking advantage of a brief spell on the upper decks, had leaped into the sea.

But among those who reached port in the New World there was a fierce determination to survive. The history of African slavery in the Americas is full of accounts of resistance and revolt against the European masters. The shipwrecked slaves who took over the Island of St. Vincent and came to be known as the Black Caribs, the Ashanti who revolted and vanquished the Dutch armed forces in Surinam, the Maroons of Jamaica, and the ex-slaves of Haiti who destroyed Napoleon's armies, all bear witness to the unquenched spirit of those millions of Africans exiled from their own land.

175
162
569

Whereas the Indians of Haiti were not resilient, the Africans were. More and more slaves were poured into Hispaniola. By the eighteenth century the slave population represented countless tribes and kingdoms of West Africa. There were Senegalese, Foulas, Poulards, Sosos, Bambarras, Kiambaras, Mandingos, and Yolofs from northwest Africa. There were Aradas, Mahis, Haussas, Ibos, Anagos or Yorubas, Bini, Takwas, Fidas, Aminex, Fantis, Agouas, Sobos, Limbas, and Adjas from the coast and interior of the great bulge of Africa. From Angola and the Congo basin came the Solongos, the Mayombés, the Mousombés, the Moundongues, the Bumbas, the Kangas, and others. Although there is no official record, Haitians themselves say that there were also those tall

2: Courlander 9-6 (1927-1965) 1968 SV3 Haiti SV3

people known as the Janghevs, or Dinkas, from the region of the Upper Nile, and Baganda from Uganda.[1] A few proper names that have survived, such as Ras Médé, suggest that there may have been men from Ethiopia among them. Old slavers' records show that numerous shipments were made from Madagascar and Mozambique on the East African coast.[2]

These transplanted people came from all classes and stations of life. Some were criminals condemned and sold by their own tribesmen; others were prisoners captured in intertribal raids or by Arab slave hunts. There were men of royal blood among them, as well as artisans and tribal scholars. The slave cargoes included leaf doctors, bards, musicians, wood carvers, metalworkers, drum makers, boatbuilders, hunters, and farmers.

In Haiti they were thrown together into a common mold. Shoulder to shoulder in the plantation fields were Bambaras, Anagos, Takwas, and Bumbas—peoples with different backgrounds, different languages, different legends, and different traditions. There were Moslems and so-called pagans, herdsmen and river-boatmen. Each of them brought something of his past and unwittingly poured it into the new amalgam that was to be the Haitian.

And into this amalgam flowed some of the literature, the traditions, the religious thoughts, and the superstitions of Europe. Under Spanish, French, and English rulers the slaves were constantly subjected to ways and ideas that were new to them. They absorbed and digested, and out of the diverse and even contradictory elements they worked out new patterns of life and thinking. This was the strength and resiliency of the West African in the New World. His capacity for adaptation and for remembering what was valuable to him and forgetting what had ceased to be useful preserved his spirit and his pride.

Among the things that were lost in this vast process of adaptation were the traditions of wood carving, bronze and brass casting, and weaving. Remembered, however, were music, dancing, games, religious beliefs, concepts of nature and the supernatural, folk tales, and legends. It was the outward, material things that were abandoned, and the inward, nonmaterial things that tended to survive.

The slave system itself was largely responsible for the loss of special arts and skills. Craftsmen with specialized knowledge in metalwork were set to repairing wagons and hoes, or they simply wielded hoes in the fields. Wood carvers found no patrons to encourage them to carve images and stools. The colonial emphasis was on mass production of sugar. Other things were valueless. There was little leisure or incentive for the slave to follow his artistic aptitudes.

[1] [The name Ganda survives in Haiti as the name of a deity. Cf. P. 349 Category 116.—Analyst]

[2] [For footnote, see Category 116, P. 349.—Analyst]

[7 349]

Notes

Chapter 1: *The Making of the Haitian* (pp. 1-7)

[1]The name Ganda survives in Haiti as the name of a deity.

[2]Herskovits, in *The Myth of the Negro Past* (p. 47), provides a tabulation of raw data found in the manifests recorded for slaves shipped to Virginia between 1710 and 1769: 20,864 slaves were reported shipped from "Africa," 3,843 from Gambia, 6,777 from "Guinea," 5,224 from Calabar, 3,800 from Angola, and 1,011 from Madagascar. Of those shipped from the island of Madagascar, 473 were listed as coming from Mozambique.

[3]Bastchand de Las Casas.

Chapter 2: *Man and the Universe: Vodoun* (pp. 8-18)

[1]See Courlander, *Haiti Singing*, p. 3.

[2]Schweinfurth in *The Heart of Africa*, II, 31, says: "In Loango all exorcists and conjurers are called gangas." Leo Wiener, in *Africa and the Discovery of America* (Philadelphia: Innes and Sons, 1922), III, 32, reports: "Forms of ganga have in Fanti the meaning 'medicine' but also 'magic'—such as Nyiku ganga and Kongo nganga."

[3]Carter, *Africa Dances*, p. 120; Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, 208 ff.

[4]From the Fon *hwan-on* or *hwan-on*. Among the Arada of Dahomey a *hwan-on* was regarded as a spiritual wife of the deity. She was a servant of the cult temple, and in some instances a wife of the cult priest.

[5]Translated from the French of Ardouin, *Etudes d'Haïti*, pp. 57-59.

[6]Deren, in her *Divine Horsemen* (pp. 119 ff.), gives an excellent report of a service for Agwé in a boat at sea. Ardouin (*op. cit.*, p. 108) seems to have given the first description of this service at sea for the lwa Agwé.

[7]Leyburn, *The Haitian People*, p. 179.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 123. Leyburn advances the theory that Vodoun developed during this period as a result of the vacuum left by the Church. Although the Church did in effect leave the field to the African cults, one must assume that the Arada, Congo, and other cults were already organized and preserved of great vitality before the Haitian revolution. Implicit evidence points to a continuity of cult life from the earliest days of the African on Haitian soil. There are no statistics to reveal the extent of cult membership at the end of the eighteenth century, but the content and form of Vodoun today are so overwhelmingly African that it is difficult to think of Haitian cult activity as the product of a renaissance.

Chapter 3: *The Lwa: Gods of the Haitian Mountains* (pp. 19-29)

[1]The term *vodoun*, used in this precise sense, conforms to the original Fon (Dahomean) usage. The term *hwennsi*, also of Fon origin, signifies "spirit" and belongs to the same root

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

[p. 3]

I

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR COUNTRY

IN the ten thousand square miles of Haiti's mountains and valleys more than two and a half million people—some say more than three million—are crowded together. Some are black, some light-skinned, but less than five thousand are white, and these are almost all recent immigrants to the country. Modern Haiti has its racial roots primarily in Africa, but its social roots lie as much in Europe as in Africa; if it is "American" at all, geography and a few fairly superficial characteristics are the only American qualities it displays.

Carrying our own cultural interpretations with us when we visit our Caribbean neighbor, we are likely to misunderstand what we see in Haiti, for it is very easy to think of all colored people in terms of our own. To do so is to remain completely ignorant of Haiti. Whereas in the United States we use "Negro" and "colored" indiscriminately as synonyms, making a real distinction only between "black" and "mulatto," all four terms are taboo in polite society in Haiti. A new descriptive vocabulary, an entirely new frame of reference, must be acquired by the friendly foreign visitor to this West Indian republic.[1]

Probably the most striking phenomenon in the country is its division into two social groups. So rigidly are the class lines set that

1. No greater error of tact can be made by visitors to Haiti than to use such commonly accepted American terms as Negro, colored, mulatto, blacks, Africans. Whereas in the United States such words are employed to describe people with a greater or less degree of Negro blood, in Haiti they are generally regarded as opprobrious epithets, emphasizing the color of the epidermis as all important, while ignoring the essential matters of culture, standard of living, and social background. Not many Haitians would have the grace to reply, as President Pétion suggested to a subaltern who was incensed at a white man for calling him "un nègre," "Why, then, did you not call him 'un blanc'?" Probably the most offensive of all the terms is *mulâtre*, for it calls attention to miscegenation in the family. The educated people in general regard themselves as darker Frenchmen, not as transplanted Africans. Books about Haiti which refer to the "black republic" seem to them to ignore the important fact that the blacks, though numerically preponderant, do not rule. The visitor must accordingly acquire a new vocabulary of color. It is safer not to make any allusion at all to the matter; but if occasion demands, one speaks of "jaune" and "brun," not white and black.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

565 caste is the only word to describe the effective separation of aristocrats from the masses. The caste system is a vivid fact, for it regulates a person's profession, speech, religion, marriage, family life, politics, clothes, social mobility—in short, his whole life from cradle to grave.

175 Haiti won its freedom from the France of Napoleon in 1804,
648 becoming thus the second independent state in the Western Hemisphere. It had been during the eighteenth century France's most prosperous colony, its wealth depending upon slavery and the plantation system. With the whites driven out, social distinctions which
565 642 actually had their roots in colonial times began immediately to develop among the people, all of whom had some proportion of African blood in their veins. During the course of the next century the criteria for aristocracy slowly assumed recognizable form, so that now even the most casual observer is aware that Haiti cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called a democratic country, with an open class system. The two castes are the élite and the masses. They are as different as day from night, as nobleman from peasant; and they are as separate as oil and water. The élite are generally reckoned
● [62] to compose at the outside not more than three per cent of the population.

565 The élite do not work with their hands. This is the cardinal rule of Haitian society. Upon it rests the whole economic structure of the
463 country, and to this the course of national history has led. All the
[461] professions, most governmental and military offices, and the large business enterprises are effectively closed to young men of the masses. Indeed, so completely accepted are caste rules, so practically difficult would it be for peasant youths to acquire the money and education necessary for such careers, that at birth a boy's future place in economic life is, within narrow limits, already predetermined. For the élite, law is the most popular of the professions, partly because it is the quickest avenue of approach to high political office; government, in turn, is the only career which can make a man rich within a few years. Next in popularity to law comes medicine. Teaching is not lucrative enough to attract many promising youths, and the priests of the Roman Catholic Church are almost all white Frenchmen.[2]

783 797 2. An effort was once made by the Catholic Church to train native Haitian priests, but the peasants would have none of them after they were ordained. They drove them out, saying, "Go away! How do you expect God to listen to you? You are not white; you don't know anything." And the Haitian priests had to be transferred as missionaries to Africa.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

mar or any schoolmaster's correction; he behaves like his fellows; he learns by trial and error, by imitation, by the praise and ridicule of his elders, what to do and what not to do. What really matters in life is having food to eat, avoiding bad luck in health and crops, having a wife and family, keeping on the right side of the spirits, and being able at night to dance, sing, and tell tales with his friends. He wears no tight-fitting clothes, never bothers about fashions, certainly never puzzles his brain to reconcile his theological and philosophical views with each other. This is by no means a poetic or idyllic existence for him, however. The peasant is so poor that misfortune may be catastrophic; the soil he has to farm is worn out by decades of erosion and crude tillage; disease is so widespread that most people know misery. A man cannot, even if he would, save up for a rainy day; he lacks the necessary implements to plough deep while sluggards sleep. One is safe so long as he does what everyone else does, and if this rule breaks down, at least misery will have company. Keep out of harm's way if possible, but bear it stoically when it comes. Avoid what is strange—particularly all legal documents, courts, politics, city ways, and people who shout orders. The peasant is conservative because radical changes, such as come from revolutions, for example, dislocate his life, leaving him worse off than before. Progress and improvement are to him only vague abstractions, much less real than the struggle for mere existence.

For the élite, on the other hand, life is rather a struggle to maintain and improve the standard of living. It is always easier to predict what a person will not do than what he will. It would be hard to define, therefore, a typical aristocrat. In one basic matter, however, the high-class Haitian is poles removed from the peasant: instead of accepting things as they are ("*Bon Dieu bon*," runs the peasant saying: God is good—and the inflection of the voice implies that the second "bon" may also mean "inscrutable"), the élite person is restlessly dissatisfied with the conditions of life: economic, social, political. His unexpressed ideal is to be accepted as an equal in the cultured circles of Western society, to have the same entrée to courts, clubs, and parties abroad as cultivated white Europeans and Americans.

Since the country has never had an accurate census, it is not possible to say precisely how many persons belong to each caste. By the most generous estimates not one out of twenty-five Haitians is élite—and such a figure stretches the category to a point which no literate

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

162 565 369 citizen would admit. The few cities and towns of Haiti do not contain more than 250,000 people in a total population which the atlases generally put around 2,500,000. Since to live in the city is one necessary mark of aristocracy, and since obviously not every town- or city-dweller is an aristocrat, it is probably nearer the mark to infer that not more than two or three per cent of the people are of the élite.

565 554 A slightly larger group would fit neither category. This intermediate section would consist chiefly of those who have taken a few steps toward the upper stratum; they may wear shoes and keep a small shop and speak a few words of French, but not yet be accepted in "respectable" society; aristocrats will look down on them while the masses will regard them with curious interest. Yet these are not what Europeans would call a middle class. In their own generation, they are rootless and insecure. Their children will have as many advantages as the parents can afford, so that the next generation may increase the distance between itself and the common folk. Included in this intermediate group are also a few who, having once been up, are now on the way down.

433 162 If the terms "masses" and "peasants" are used interchangeably in these pages, it is because the vast majority of the people get their living from the soil. Haiti is, as it has always been, an agricultural country. The end-paper map lists all towns which claim as many as 7,500 people; only one, the capital, Port-au-Prince, has more than 100,000.[1]

162 184 105 At least nine out of ten Haitians, therefore, lead rural lives, and easily fit the designation of peasant. They live in little communities, generally of less than a hundred persons, rather than in scattered houses. A detailed map would be dotted with place names of these

[162] [114]

1. The estimates made by Woodring, in his *Geology of the Republic of Haiti*, p. 87, are as follows:

Port-au-Prince	125,000	Saint-Marc	10,000
Cap-Haïtien	20,000	Jacmel	10,000
Les Cayes	15,000	Port-de-Paix	7,500
Gonaïves	12,000	Jérémie	7,500

It should be noted that all eight of these towns, which by Woodring's estimate have a total of 207,000, are seaports. The country is so mountainous that no cities have grown up in the interior. The map also includes a number of towns smaller than 7,500: these are capitals of *arrondissements* or seats of courts. Woodring remarks that if the people who live in towns having a population of more than 1 thousand were added to the list above, the total "urban" population then would be between 225,000 and 250,000, which is barely ten per cent of the total in the country.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

tiny communities, some of them designating "villages" of only four or five houses. For numbers of peasants hidden away in the valleys or on mountain farms, the only contact with the larger world comes through visits to the nearest market town—which itself may count only a thousand souls. The peasant is thus effectively isolated. The American Financial Adviser to the Government has estimated the average *annual* income of the Haitian at $20 a head.[8] The smallness of the sum limits the material contacts of the peasant with the outside world. Rural schools are few,[9] consequently all but a small percentage of the rising generation is growing up illiterate. Lack of mental stimulus completes the isolation. Bound to the soil by the need of wresting a livelihood from rocky, gullied, and increasingly unproductive land, harassed by ill-health, and governed by a group whose own security would be threatened by improving his lot, it is little wonder that the peasant is unprogressive, or that he struggles along at a bare subsistence level."

Haiti is rural and agricultural, then, with a population density of about 250 per square mile. The people, living without machine industry and with very little foreign trade, must get their living from 10,000 square miles, not of lush tropical soil but of rocky, mountainous country which, after a century and a half of poor farming, has been stripped of most of its forests and much of its topsoil.

A glance at a relief map of the West Indies would show clearly that the islands are the tops of a mountain range, whose lowlands were long since submerged by the Caribbean Sea. Looked at from above, Haiti seems a jumbled mass of mountains running in all directions.[10] Down their slopes flow many small streams which after

8. Dr. W. W. Cumberland, cited by Paul H. Douglas, "The American Occupation of Haiti," *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII (1927), 238.

9. The average monthly salary of $13 (until recently only $6) for rural schoolteachers would not draw many wide-awake young men, even if schoolhouses existed for classes. The salary, indeed, is so small that only inferior persons are attracted, often men who know little more than their pupils. See chap. XV, 3.

10. Mrs. Blair Niles, in *Black Haiti* (New York, 1926), pp. 183–186, tells of a prisoner who preferred to remain in jail rather than be freed. "'Where he goes out,' she quotes the officer as saying, 'he'll be in again. You'll see. Here he gets nine cents a day for food, an' that's more than the average Haitian ever has.'"

11. One can well believe the story (told by Ebenezer D. Bassett, *Haiti* [Washington, 1893], p. 3) of the English admiral who, asked by George III for a description of the island, crumpled a sheet of paper, threw it on the table, and said: "Sire, Haiti looks like that." The same tale is told of Puerto Rico, with a Spanish admiral speaking to Queen Isabella.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

175 565 took their place in the business life of the towns, sending their children to parish schools. Colored youths served in the colonial constabulary and in the militia, acquiring a knowledge of arms and warfare later to be useful to them.

175 565 423 567 162 Estimates of their wealth vary. Some say that in 1791 they owned a third of all the land in the colony and a fourth of all the slaves; others more conservative put the figure at one fifth of each. Even this is impressive enough to account for much of the growing jealousy of their position. And by 1791 the whites outnumbered them only ten to seven.[2]

562 595 563 175 581 White women in general added their support to a movement instigated by the petits blancs for discrimination against all gens de couleur. Many wives felt resentment against the colored people because of the frequency with which their husbands took colored mistresses.[3] Moreover, the wealth of the colony attracted an immigration of Frenchwomen with marriageable but undowered daughters—in the candid French phrase, "*de filles à marier et sans dot*"—who seem to have assumed that young planters would want white French wives, even though impecunious ones. It was a shock to quite a number of them to discover that a colonial youth might prefer a colored girl who brought a dowry with her.[4]

175 565 829 Indiscreet affranchis often gave additional grounds for resentment against their group. Wishing to dissociate themselves altogether from their Negro ancestry and to be assured of social eminence, some accounted for their dark complexions by reference to obscure Indian progenitors. On this ground many secured letters patent from local government officials, of course on payment of a fee, legally estab-

162 1. The census listed 40,000 whites to 28,000 colored. L. E. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description . . . de la partie française . . . de Saint-Domingue* (Philadelphia, 1797), I, 283, gave the following figures for 1790:

	Square Leagues	Population	Whites	Affranchis	Slaves
North	480	193,000	16,000	8,000	170,000
West	820	194,000	14,000	12,500	168,000
South	186	131,000	10,000	6,500	114,000
Totals	1,486	518,000	40,000	28,000	452,000

2. One governor reported to Paris that he considered sexual jealousy the greatest cause of unrest in the colony.

3. See Sir Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World* (New York, 1910), p. 541.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

people: "If ever you refuse, or grumblingly accept, the laws which the genius guarding your destinies dictates to me for your happiness, you will merit the fate of ungrateful people. But perish that hideous idea!" There can be little doubt that he wished Haiti under his direction to become prosperous; but it is likewise clear that he was personally self-centred and inordinately grasping.

Each step Dessalines took to further his ambitions either for Haitian prosperity or for his own fortunes had its bearing upon the development of social classes in the country. Extermination of all remaining whites was one of the first tasks he set himself. On a promise of clemency he lured several hundred gullible French out of hiding, and butchered them in cold blood. His campaign of extirpation was methodical and thorough. To try to penetrate into the psychological background of this violence is to desert fact for speculation: it may have been a desire for revenge on the French, pure and simple; it may have been gloating sadism; he may have wished to warn France against any future attempts to regain possession of the country; or he may have wanted to notify his subjects of his intention to rule with severe discipline. Certainly this last aim was achieved, if any of his people did not already know, after two years of warfare, the extent of his ruthlessness. He ruled by fear and by threats, never by the cultivation of loyalties.

Apparently he was afraid that Napoleon would renew his efforts to subdue the former colony. To forestall such an attempt he ordered each of his governing subalterns to construct one great fort on the most prominent hill in their district—a scheme which led immediately to the institution of forced labor. He likewise devised a plan, not actually put into effect, for destroying all towns and plantations near the coast and moving the capital to an inland village; and so isolating Haitians from all contact with the outside world.

Turning to domestic policy, he faced a herculean task. The warfare of 1802–3 had left the country in chaos. Plantations and agricultural projects were almost totally ruined. All habits of steady industry had been lost. Dread of a possible new attack by the French made necessary a great army, and this in turn removed most able-bodied men from productive labor in the fields, while the construction of fortresses still further depleted the labor supply. The first census of free Haiti, in 1805 (probably not highly accurate), showed only 380,000 people, with the women outnumbering men by almost three to two.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

two. Here was a decline of about 150,000 from 1790.[2] It is a commentary on the man's forcefulness that in spite of all difficulties Dessalines established an effective economic organization. Its basis was serfdom.

Every citizen, he announced, must consider himself in one of two categories, laborer or soldier. There were to be no shirkers in the new Haiti; if a man was not in the army, he must do manual labor. Artisans who followed a craft counted as laborers. Women, since they could not join the army, must work shoulder to shoulder with their men. It was understood that direction of Haiti's new order would be carried on by state officials who were neither laborers nor soldiers, but these officials were to be so few that they would not constitute a separate third category.

This step of Dessalines' was a radical one. It proclaimed the mastery of state over individual; and even more significantly it divided the people according to economic task, rather than birth, wealth, color, or social status. At first the more ambitious citizens bore patiently with the arbitrary decree, thinking they might be able to achieve comfortable status under a lenient definition of "soldier" or else by sinecure tasks as officials. Their disillusionment was swift. Even swifter was the chagrin of the lowly folk who had been slaves, for they found themselves now in actual bondage to one of their own color.

All people except soldiers, ran the decree, must be "attached as cultivators to a plantation." This might be translated to read "bound to the soil." The vast majority of the people were forced willy-nilly into agriculture. It was "formally prohibited for a cultivator to desert the plantation to which he was assigned"; conversely, it was a crime to give asylum to a runaway cultivator, male or female.[3] If such conditions differed from slavery, they were at least close to what the mediaeval world knew as serfdom. But under this régime of forced labor the recently ravaged fields once more became productive: cotton plantations again covered the plain of the Artibonite, and sugar refineries were slowly rebuilt all over the country.

To forestall complaint from the people once again driven into

2. See, for an analysis of population figures, Placide Justin, *Histoire politique et statistique de l'Ile d'Haïti, Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1826), pp. 320–323.

3. A certain Mlle. Chapotin, of respectable family, was accused of having harbored a fugitive female cultivator, and, since she was unable to pay immediately the fine imposed upon her by the police at Port-au-Prince, she was condemned to serve a jail term.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

tion? Here again, the decision of a leader fixed the direction of Haitian life for decades to come. It is agreed by commentators that overmilitarization was the bane of nineteenth-century Haiti. One tenth of all able-bodied men were constantly in active army service. Moreover, all the male cultivators on plantations must hold themselves in readiness to obey the government's call to arms; ammunition and arms were stored in every parish. A military mentality was nourished, the people early learning the lesson (apparently unchallenged by any liberal) that the army should rule and the people obey.

Although the common soldiers were ex-slaves who, upon dismissal from service, would return to the ranks of agricultural workers, their officers had a higher status. Noncommissioned officers had a long road to travel to eminence, but like the overseers they had at least a glimpse of the promised land of distinction. Captains and generals had this vision within their grasp: they were already of the elite.

In the subcategory of "artisans" were included all the townspeople who carried on crafts or trades. It must be remembered that Haiti had no cities, and that its two largest towns then numbered probably no more than 10,000 people each, so that artisans were not numerous. Since there was a distinction in the arduousness of various pursuits as well as in their financial return there existed in this category, as in the official and military, some chance for social prestige.

The only persons remaining outside the categories mentioned were colored landowners who had held estates in the colonial period. Dessalines took active steps to gain control of most of the land in the country, but at his death in 1806 there were still many of the old proprietors left who were, in the main, determined to hold their land and preserve their dignity as non-laborers.

Assassination by his political foes ended the career of Dessalines only two years after he assumed power. In 1805 he had had himself crowned emperor in imitation of Napoleon, but unlike Napoleon he permitted no nobility. "*Moi seul, je suis noble!*" he replied to ambitious henchmen who asked for the establishment of a peerage. It was the Emperor's tactless handling of the social situation which caused his murder, for he touched sensitive nerves on the raw in attacking property rights, inherited privilege, color distinctions, and social aspirations. The cultivators grumblingly accepted his decrees; the ambitious upper group did not.

The former affranchis fully intended to keep their lands once the

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

recognized that the really important characteristics peculiar to the peasant are his sentiments and attitudes, the intense attachment to his native soil and family tradition, which, even in the economic sphere, take precedence over the desire for individual advancement and gain."[51]

Haiti in 1804 was still a country of large estates, and Dessalines and Christophe strove to keep it so. Under the active generosity of Pétion and the passive indifference of Boyer after his Code Rural had failed, few great plantations were left intact. The recorded donations of these two presidents to their generals, civil functionaries, and lesser officers, are as follows:[52]

134 grants of 150 carreaux (about 450 acres). Total:			59,300 acres.
176	35	105	18,480
639	30	90	57,510
711	25	75	54,325
2,322	20	60	139,320
8,000	5	15	120,000
		Grand total:	448,935 acres.

Haiti followed French law rather than British, so that the rule of primogeniture did not prevail. It requires only a moment's reflection to see that even within a single generation the thousands of small properties noted in the table would be subdivided many times, since a father apportioned his land to all his sons. By 1842 it is probable that not a single plantation of the size common in colonial times was still intact.[53] On the testimony of numerous government officials and commandants of arrondissements, it was estimated in that year that 46,610 small landed properties were under fair cultivation.[54] If the population at that time be estimated at 800,000, seven eighths of whom were engaged in agriculture, there would accordingly be about fifteen people (including children) to each rural property. But

A large number of small estates are left out of this account, which are said to be *badly* cultivated, or neglected. Taking the number of each separate

51. C. von Dietze, "Peasantry," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, XII, 50.

52. This table is compiled from figures cited in Armand Thoby, *La Question agraire en Haïti* (Port-au-Prince, 1888), *passim*, and Dr. F. Dalencour, *Le Sauvetage national par le retour à la terre* (Port-au-Prince, 1923), p. 18.

53. See Raymond Renaud, *Le Régime foncier en Haïti* (Paris, 1934), pp. 42–45.

54. Candler, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

175 an ineffective government, momentarily in the hands of colored
563 élite. Attempting to dominate politics was a numerically small group
565 of colored people and a still smaller group of Negroes. Although
[701] prevailingly black, the army might be, and in the later nineteenth
[669] century was continually, used by whichever group offered more.
A third power, a middle class, might have balanced these antagonistic factions. Lacking such a moderating influence, Haiti was the victim of recurrent revolutionary movements.

175 At the time of Boyer, actual democracy would have been no safe-
178 guard, for it would have meant the supremacy of ignorance. His
642 rule was the beginning of unfortunate days for Haiti. After the
643 auspicious opening years, the President became an impotent onlooker as his country declined. It is instructive to compare the Haiti of Dessalines and Christophe with the Haiti of 1843, only one generation later.[62]

175 The Haiti of 1806 had been a beehive of activity. Soldiers, fore-
178 men, and policemen then stood over the workers with lianes to
642 force them to labor for the benefit of their state. Production was
433 carefully planned, an ordered hierarchy making every person in the
466 country responsible to another higher than himself until the ruler was reached at the pinnacle. The cardinal fault of any laborer was to shirk at his task. The year 1843, on the contrary, found Haiti in a condition of quiescence which, to those who remembered the old days, resembled torpor. The central government had ceased to drive its citizens, and its half-hearted attempts at persuasion were futile. Overseers, drivers of gangs of workers, soldiers whose duty it was to enforce labor, had disappeared from the scene. Every man was his own master.

175 The standard of living in 1806 as in 1843 was low; but in the earlier
178 year there had been a promise of great things to come once Haiti
511 had rebuilt what war had destroyed. The succeeding years, however, failed to inculcate into the people a desire for any higher standard of life. Country dwellers were benighted; ignorance deepened the habit

[162] 62. Haiti has never had an accurate census, so that it is impossible even to estimate
[175] the total population of the country either in 1806 or in 1843. The figures of 380,000 and 800,000 given by some authors for the two years are mere guesses. Likewise, one can only deduce the proportion of people in the main economic and social categories; probably seventy-five per cent of the Haitians were serfs in 1806 and the same percentage peasants in 1843; the "aristocracy," including all who did not derive a living by manual labor or army service, could hardly have reached five per cent in either year; the army, house servants, day laborers in the towns, and petty businessmen would make up the other twenty per cent.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

to attempt to retrace the path of property evolution, which has steadily taken its own course since the time of Pétion."

With the peasants prevailingly satisfied in their daily round of life, the separation of upper and lower castes in Haitian society has gradually become an accepted fact. At least ninety per cent of the total population now belong to the peasant group, whose members are as much reconciled to their status as in the United States the poorest colored folk to theirs. Vaguely they may often wish they had the privileges and luxuries of those above them; often, likewise, they feel resentment at the way in which they are treated; but in so far as it is permissible to generalize about two million people, it is fair to say that the Haitian peasant rarely complains of his lot.

Of the remaining ten per cent of the population a small fraction look upon themselves as élite. Some families of this group can be traced back to colonial times when their ancestors were already affranchis; others began to take on aristocracy under Dessalines, Christophe, Pétion, and Boyer. Those whose forebears have become élite only since 1843 are less firmly entrenched in the topmost class. However, since no president since Boyer has ever succeeded in weakening caste lines, the élite one or two per cent may be said to constitute a stable social group.

It is significant that although the blacks had the government in their hands for three quarters of a century they were unable to effect any slight change either in caste membership or in caste lines.

The part of the population which is neither élite nor peasant is not "middle class," as that term is understood in the Western World. It is rather a shifting percentage of Haitians whose one prevailing characteristic is their residence in towns. Some are wage earners, some small tradesmen; some are ex-élite on the way down the

11. The intimate observer of the Haitian peasant never fails to comment upon his love of the land. Whereas the colonial planter attached a value to his estate because it produced wealth, the peasant loves his little plot because it is his home. Through all the sixteen successive constitutions of Haiti, the one unchangeable article has been the prohibition of sale to foreigners of real estate in the country. Haitian land is for Haitian people—or was so until after the American Occupation. Likewise, the peasant is suspicious of any law which seems likely to reintroduce the system of large properties, for these might condemn him to leave his land and work at wages for the benefit of a master who, whether kindly or pitiless, would still deprive him of his present liberty. Therefore the Haitian countryman defends with all his force this soil to which his liberty attaches him, and which he cultivates after his own manner. "The Haitian loves his land almost as a man loves his woman."

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

The men seldom or never go to mass, except on the days particularly set apart by the government as public fêtes. On these occasions the president and all the officers of Hayti go in procession, but the idea of devotion, I believe, never enters their contemplation. Such days are merely set aside for celebrating some particular event, which it is wished should be handed down to posterity. These occasions present only the external symbol of religion, the whole people being either ignorant or careless of its real character. Their manner and appearance during the celebration of the mass shew that they have no inward feelings of piety or devotion."[13]

Catholicism in Haiti, then, had fallen on evil days; Protestantism, on the other hand, was unable to gain any foothold. Boyer, indifferent to all religion, did not even care to tolerate Wesleyan missionaries as Pétion had done, for when certain of them arrived and were met with "persecution and stoning by a mob," it required persuasion to gain his assent to freeing those the police had taken into custody. He forbade any further meetings of Wesleyans, on the ground that they stirred up riots. At the close of Boyer's administration it was estimated that there were only about 1,200 Protestants in the country, mostly Methodists and Baptists, and these primarily Negroes who had come from the United States to settle in the republic.

Although the Haitian government probably derived a certain satisfaction from controlling a state Church, Boyer was impelled both by circumstance and his own temperament to obtain the approval of the Holy See. His own tepid spiritual zeal had nothing to do with the case; Haitian public order would benefit by a superior group of priests, and Haitian prestige would rise, he thought, with recognition by Rome. Having already in 1826 settled the conflict between France and Haiti in the political sphere, Boyer tried assiduously to end the schism from Rome. His propositions were examined with benevolence by the Pope, who conferred upon the primate of the Indies, archbishop of Santo Domingo, the title of archbishop of Haiti. This personage, however, was a Spaniard already established in the comfortable city of Santo Domingo amidst people of his own nationality. He could not be persuaded to move to Port-au-Prince. The failure of Boyer's efforts is due more to this ecclesiastic than to uncoöperativeness on the part of Rome. From 1834 to 1860 the Court of Rome had official representatives in Haiti, but they cannot have been very effective men, for conditions in

13. James Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti*, pp. 394–395.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

to try to renovate the old. Gradually the work became established, increasing in scope with the years.

It is not necessary to present a detailed history of the work of Catholicism in Haiti since 1860. The most striking feature of these years is its relationship to Vodun, which will be treated shortly. The progress made by the Church itself can best be seen by a summary of conditions in 1930.

Haiti is divided into dioceses named after its principal towns and cities. The population statistics are based upon figures of births covering more than fifty years, and although estimates, they are probably as accurate as any other population statistics for Haiti:

Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince	942,700
Diocese of Cap-Haitien	453,000
Diocese of Les Cayes	628,000
Diocese of Gonaives	475,000
Diocese of Port-de-Paix	153,590
Total	2,652,290

To care for this large and predominantly illiterate population there are 205 priests,[14] only 8 of whom are Haitians; 105 Brothers; and 366 Sisters.[15] The assiduous educational work of these *religieux* will be discussed in another connection.

The country's 10,200 square miles are divided into 112 parishes, which generally correspond to the political communes, although there are several parishes in the larger centres of population. In the rural sections 465 mission chapels are located at strategic points.[16]

Any casual attempt to assess the importance of religion in the daily

14. Of these, 156 are in charge of parishes or missions (the secular priests). The remaining 49 are regular clergy (that is, belonging to a religious or monastic order). All parishes in the diocese of Port-de-Paix and two in Port-au-Prince are in charge of the regular clergy; the other regular monks are doing educational work or other special service connected with the dioceses.

15. The Brothers are Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne; of the number 83 are French, 10 French Canadian, 9 Spanish, and 3 Haitian. The Sisters belong to three congregations: 146 to St. Joseph de Cluny, 198 to Les Filles de la Sagesse, and 22 to Les Filles de Marie.

16. All the figures cited above are drawn from the *Report of the Forbes Commission to Haiti*, 1930, pp. 16–17.

3: Leyburn Z-4,5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

wedding to consecrate their state. These unions might be called (after Anglo-Saxon usage) common-law marriages. Many such couples have, late in life, gone through the wedding ceremony at the insistence of children aspiring to social prestige.

Haitian writers have frequently felt it necessary to explain and justify to the outside world the practice of plaçage. Thus Saint-Rémy in 1857 wrote: "*Plaçage*, or primitive marriage, is still one of the Haitian customs. It requires no civil or religious formality. I must confess that some of these unions are more respectable than those sanctified by civil and religious law."[1] Dantès Bellegarde in 1934 implied (erroneously) that the practice had always been one limited primarily to peasants. He said:

> Haitians have been accused of immorality because they practice free unions. This reproach is unjust. Concubinage is without doubt the rule among the people [that is, the peasants and workmen]; but it constitutes a sort of *mariage interdit* (unlegal marriage) which, in many cases, has nothing immoral about it, certain "plaçages" having more solidity and seriousness than a large number of regular marriages. In order to understand the existence of this custom and its persistence in the lower classes of Haitian society, one must go back to the colonial epoch: the whites kept numerous concubines, white women being few in Saint-Domingue. (The white population of Saint-Domingue was composed in 1789 of 30,826 souls, of whom 21,166 were men and 9,660 women—not counting soldiers and sailors.) On the other hand, the Negroes did not marry each other, because they did not care at all to have wives whom the master might "abuse," to use the word of Père du Tertre; moreover, masters did not require their slaves to be married: they mated them with a view to obtaining fine "products."
>
> Concubinage tends to disappear among us, or at least to become more discreet. In the cultivated class people generally marry, and the girls in most modest condition—having passed through the primary schools—resign themselves willingly today to the diversion of their unused affections to cats and other domestic animals if no one offers to lead such girls to the altar.[2]

Nineteenth-century visitors were generally shocked by plaçage, just as middle-class people are usually shocked by sex ways which seem franker than their own. That the Haitian practice was a practical one, based upon a desire to preserve property intact within the

1. *Pétion et Haïti*, V, 66 note.
2. *Un Haïtien parle* (Port-au-Prince, 1934), pp. 30–31.

3: Leyburn Z-4,5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

[p. 193]

XI

DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE PEASANTS

HAITI apparently has more women than men. This is not merely the casual impression of visitors, but a general conviction among local scholars and priests who know the country intimately. There is no census, of course, so that an investigator lacks means of confirming an unusual biological situation in which, it is said, there are five women to four men, in which many more girls than boys are born, and in which the death rate is higher for females than for males.

During slavery, more men than women were imported into the colony, but the slaughters of the insurrection and the revolution more than balanced the two sexes. The colonial census of 1790, probably inaccurate, showed 452,000 blacks and 28,000 affranchis who had some degree of Negro blood; a census of 1805, which certainly could not have been more than an estimate based on reports of plantation overseers and army officers, reported only 380,000 Haitians. This would indicate a staggering loss of 100,000 within fifteen years. Even with a reasonable juggling of the figures, it is obvious that deaths increased during the troubled years, and obviously males rather than females met their death on battlefields. Commentators on Haiti under Dessalines already speak of the preponderance of women. Other writers during the nineteenth century expressed the opinion that women outnumbered men, but the only figures offered were those in one parish for 1821–26—possibly atypical even if the figures are accurate—showing that 1,305 girls were born as compared with 1,209 boys.[1]

Certain physicians whose practice takes them into country districts and also certain priests have stated their belief that the number of females born exceeds the number of males. Although these men are in a good position to judge, the statement remains an opinion not yet validated by statistics; if it should prove true, it would be an extraordinary biological freak.[2] Another observation must be set

1. These are the figures of Charles Mackenzie, *Notes on Hayti*, II, 118.

2. One physician thinks that the rate would be as high as five girls to three boys in a few parishes; and a priest recounts his experiences in baptizing girls named "Assez-filles" (Girls-enough), so called by their parents to indicate to deity that the next child should by rights be a boy. Professional observations such as these merely corroborate the general opinion as to the excess of females in the population.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

Another observation must be set

588 alongside this professional testimony: many men, both aristocrats
• 162 and common folk, have more than one placée, yet there seem to be
enough women for Haitian men.

595 Although peasants in Haiti are rarely married by formal ceremony,
625 the family is a dominant characteristic of peasant life. This sums up
the domestic situation among the masses.

When it is recalled that the Negro, from the time he was taken from Africa on slave ships, had almost no experience of the European tradition of conventional marriage, one has a partial explanation of the absence of peasant weddings. For the rest the people are realists, arguing that a man should have as many women as he needs to carry on the economy of his land holdings; the law forbids polygamy, but exerts no control over plural unions which are entered without formal ceremony. It has therefore come to be regularly accepted in the mores that practical need should determine the number of women to one man. If a peasant increases his land holdings, if he buys or inherits a second farm on the other side of the mountain, it is only common sense for him to take a second woman, raise a family by her, and thus have an overseer and a labor supply resident on each of his properties. Everyone in the community knows what women belong to what man, and custom strongly taboos any tampering with another man's spouses.

162 Only the Catholic Church has statistics to reveal the infrequency
581 of marriages among the masses. The story was the same a century
163 ago as now. In the important parish of Gonaïves in 1825 the proportion of marriages to births was as 1 to 62; in 1826 they were as 1 to 54.[3] Both figures include marriages and births among the élite, and Gonaïves is a town: in the countryside the proportion of marriages would be much lower. The parish priest of Carrefours, which numbers about a thousand households, stated that in 1936 there had been only ten marriages among his six or eight thousand parishioners.
[848] Another parish priest estimated that only one half of one per cent of the baptisms performed were of children born to parents legally married. Even in the parish of Pétionville, home of many élite, a priest estimates that less than one child in five is born to married
595 parents. A century ago a commandant at Léogane, speaking of a high army officer, said, "He is my brother-in-law: I live with his sister." Near Port-au-Prince lived a rural police captain with six plaçage

3. Mackenzie, *op. cit.*, II, 119–120.

Spouses,

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

595 spouses. In the hills more than one peasant house was surrounded, as it would have been in Dahomey, by huts in each of which lived a "wife" of the farmer. Matters are not very different nowadays, except that men have learned the wisdom of not having their women live too close to each other.

● 162 582 From the guesses of experienced observers, it is probably not far wide of the mark to estimate that only one couple out of a hundred is married according to the approved mode of the Western World.

The State apparently does not care; or, to put it another way, government officials know how impossible it would be to alter a custom confirmed by long usage; one which, moreover, works well enough, since it causes practically no violence or legal cases for the 795 State to attend to. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, is eager 582 to persuade the people to observe the sacrament of holy matrimony. The priests have assiduously endeavored to explore the peasant mind in order to learn what deters the average person from formal marriage. The reasons for the indifference to weddings might be listed as follows:

581 178 1. Inertia. There is no convincing reason to vary time-honored practice which works well enough, particularly since a wedding is likely to cause a great disturbance of daily routine and even a measure of jealousy on the part of those who have not made the display.

581 821 2. Suspicion of legal documents and civil officials. People who put their names (or marks) on documents and who call the attention of governmental officials to themselves are almost sure to rue the day. A man knows what can be demanded of him by custom in his informal unions; but who can say what the law would hold him responsible for?

581 585 3. Expense. The civil license costs; the priest and his assistants must be paid; to be married in church, one should wear shoes; if one wears shoes, one should dress up to them; a church wedding calls for a feast. At least two days must be spent away from work if the proper formalities are carried out.

581 595 4. Common sense in an inevitable situation. Both State and Church would try to limit a man to one wife; prosperity might demand two or more. Is it sensible to discriminate against a second woman, who might be just as much help to a man as his legal wife?

581 794 The Church through its priests works unceasingly to answer these arguments, but without notable success. Inertia is hard to overcome;

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

3. The unimportance of the legislature. It
 has made THE HAITIAN PEOPLE useful patro...

646 age for the president to dispense, and has preserved the semblance of
642 republican government; but hardly half a dozen legislative sessions in all Haitian history have contributed seminal ideas in politics or initiated true reforms. How could they, indeed, when the president was consistently a dictator of policy?

666 4. The undemocratic nature of the vote. Senators are chosen by
642 the representatives, and the two groups together have generally elected the president, when he did not come to power by revolution. The only chance people have had to vote has been for local officials and representatives. In these cases, the vote has been limited to the elite and the army, with the president's henchmen counting the ballots. Since the Occupation there have been plebiscites on constitutional changes, the people having the right to vote Yes or No.

692 5. The subservience of the courts to the president. They have been
643 filled with president's men, generally astute enough to consult presi-
642 dential wishes before handing down a decision. Foreign merchants soon learned that they could expect little "justice" from the courts if their own cause conflicted with special Haitian interests. Foreign diplomats likewise learned that in crises the courts could involve the simplest issue in such verbal complexity that months of patience would be necessary to unwind the red tape.

641 6. The pliability of "constitutional rights." Freedom of speech and
661 of the press has been notably lacking, although scurrilous attacks on the administration's enemies have often been permitted. Legislators
642 have been expelled. Graft has flourished. In 1833, for example, two representatives were expelled from the House "for systematically opposing the measures of the executive, and persisting in a demand for a statement of public expenditures." A century later a senator was expelled for almost the same reasons.

701 7. Militarism. Only in this respect is any real change apparent since
178 the American Occupation. The army was always large up to 1915, and so constituted an economic drain as well as a political menace.
642 Generals had great power: they ruled each department and each
669 arrondissement, were subject only to the president, and were at the bottom of every revolutionary movement.[22] Since the Occupation

[162]
[701]

22. In 1842, when the population was still less than a million, there were in the district governments 9 generals, 63 colonels, 48 lieutenant colonels, 9 captains, 1 lieutenant, and 28 medical officers; and in the standing army 33 colonels, 95 lieutenant colonels, 823 captains, 634 lieutenants, 577 sublieutenants and ensigns, 6,815 noncommissioned officers, and 25 medical officers. The army had 28,000 soldiers and cost about $600,000 a year. See John Candler, *Brief Notices of Hayti*, pp. 86 ff.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

631 [361] Overlapping these military arrondissements have been financial arrondissements, generally six in number. The capital of each of these was a port, with a customs house: Port-au-Prince and Jacmel in the West, Les Cayes and Jérémie in the South, Cap-Haïtien in the North, and Gonaïves in the Artibonite.

Finally there were the five *départements*. These seem never to have been much more than geographical divisions to which it was convenient occasionally to refer. In more recent years, as records have been kept with more accuracy, the departments have developed important clerical significance.

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Département	*Capital*	*Estimated Population (1950)*
North	Cap-Haïtien	450,000
Northwest	Port-de-Paix	150,000
Artibonite	Gonaïves	475,000
West	Port-au-Prince	950,000
South	Les Cayes	650,000

According to the present constitution, the country still has its five administrative departments, but has increased its other political subdivisions. There are 27 arrondissements to attend to governmental details, and in addition, 10 prefectures overlapping the arrondissements and serving as units of police control. The arrondissements are still further subdivided into 94 communes, 43 military posts, and 551 rural sections. Each commune is administered by a communal magistrate, appointed by the secretary of the interior, and so subordinate to the central government. This magistrate is assisted by a communal council or a municipal council, composed of elected prominent citizens.[2]

692 693 Courts have existed only in the important towns, which since Boyer's presidency have varied in number from four to eight. Each of these courts has consisted of a president or *doyen*, four judges, four substitute judges, a commissioner appointed by the president of the republic to keep watch over the proceedings of the body, and various inferior clerks and secretaries. Judges are politically appointed, either by the president of the republic or by his cabinet. Civil cases which exceed fifty dollars in extent have been handled by these courts, as also all appeals from decisions of local juges de paix. To the judges were added in 1826 juries to assist in criminal cases

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2. See Luc Dorsinville, *Géographie-Atlas* (Port-au-Prince, 1929), *passim*.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

for the elite, and was purely cultural. By 1818 there were lower schools in six towns of the country, but only one higher school in the whole of Haiti.[13]

A report on the condition of education in 1842 showed that the Lycée still existed, its curriculum now limited to French, English, Spanish, Latin, mathematics, composition, history, and fencing.[14] Only 150 students were enrolled. By 1843 there were eleven secondary schools. The question was even raised whether Boyer's failure to promote education during the twenty-five tranquil years of his rule might not have been deliberate, on the principle that it is easier to govern ignorance than knowledge.[15] Actually, however, there was little pressure for education, and so Boyer did nothing.

Geffrard more than any other president of the nineteenth century encouraged education, with the result that almost 20,000 children received some kind of schooling. The census of 1875 made the following estimates:[16]

4 lycées	with	543 pupils
6 girls' high schools		563
5 girls' secondary schools		350
165 primary schools		11,784
200 rural schools		5,939
1 medical school		25
1 school of music		46
Total		19,250 pupils

To these must be added a few pupils in private schools and in the recently established Catholic schools of the Frères de l'Instruction Chrétienne and the Sisters of Cluny.

Toward the turn of the century, when reformers were writing books while the whole country seemed to be slowly dying under its stupid presidents, many a proposal was made which hit squarely upon the need of education and the necessity of a specifically practical curriculum. Joseph Justin[17] urged technical training by experts, and many others hammered away at the same idea. A small sum

13. Charles Mackenzie, *Notes on Hayti*, I, 83, 120–122, 158.
14. John Candler, *Brief Notices of Hayti*, pp. 74 ff.
15. Mark B. Bird, *The Black Man* (New York, 1869), p. 140.
16. Cited by Sir Spenser St. John, *Hayti, or The Black Republic*, p. 293.
17. *Etude sur les institutions haïtiennes* (Paris, 1894–95), 2 vols.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

176 871 was put into the national budget to be used for schools, but it seems generally to have been used as a fund for presidential patronage. There were even "school teachers" who could not read, but were nevertheless paid a regular monthly stipend. The principal of the Lycée at Gonaïves could neither read nor write, the music teacher there knew not a note of music, and the medical director could not name the simplest drugs.[18] Dantès Bellegarde, one of Haiti's notable intellectuals, as a minister under Nord Alexis (1902–8) made definite proposals which, had they been carried out, would have gone far toward effecting a radical reform. Minister again under Oreste (1913–14), he succeeded in building up an educational fund, but before he could spend it properly Oreste was deposed and the money used by his successor, Zamor, for military purposes.[19]

175 87 By 1915, before the Occupation began, the country had about 730 public schools. Of these, 6 gave advanced courses in medicine, law, applied science, and commerce; 10 offered a secondary classical education; 8 were special secondary boys' schools; and 15 were special secondary girls' schools. The teachers all got their training in Haiti, and the curricula and methods were almost entirely French.[20] Bellegarde had divided the country into 14 school districts, and by 1919 the official figures showed the following enrollment:[21]

[162]

387 elementary rural schools	with	21,960 pupils
206 elementary urban schools		13,881
105 presbyterial schools		4,836
49 mixed private schools		825
29 Catholic girls' schools		5,141
8 Catholic boys' schools		2,576
10 mixed popular schools		1,009
2 girls' professional schools		133
1 manual training school		555
60 national high schools		2,012
Private elementary schools		5,481
Private high schools		2,904
Total		61,313 pupils

18. See Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
19. Dantès Bellegarde, *Pour une Haïti heureuse* (Port-au-Prince, 1929), pp. 100 ff.
20. Dantès Bellegarde, *Un Haïtien parle*, p. 32.
21. *Livre bleu d'Haïti, 1919–20* (Port-au-Prince, 1920), pp. 21–22.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

mind dust, ruts, and a steady succession of bumps. To travel in the average hired car, driven by a Haitian, is one of the grim experiences of life. The driver speeds as if pursued by a demon, while the peasant pedestrians leap for safety into the ditches; the unfortunate passenger is moved to close his eyes to avoid seeing the inevitable crash which does not come. The most comfortable means of travel if one is going only to towns is by ship, for practically all of Haiti's towns are seaports.

To know the towns is still not to know Haiti, however, for two million or more Haitians live in the rural regions. These are the people. And if they are ignorant and not too clean, they are nevertheless models of kindly generosity. It is the proud boast even of the élite that one may travel the length and breadth of the land in perfect safety, in no danger of life or of personal property.

Many homely sights linger in the mind: women washing the family clothes in the stream, laughing and gossiping with their neighbors; men and women talking in animated fashion to themselves, arguing, cajoling, explaining as they walk along; individuals carrying a single flower, simply because it is beautiful; barefoot women, gnarled of hand and lined of face, kneeling in the Catholic church at prayer; taxi drivers who cruise by, hissing in order to attract the attention of a visitor who obviously can afford to ride instead of walk; an apparently ceaseless procession of patient donkeys, always laden, sometimes ridden by women, sometimes urged along from behind; the so-called buses each with its witty or its florid name (Plaisance, Éclair, Grâce-à-Dieu, Polichinelle, Sauve-qui-peut, Montparnasse), which like glorified buckboards jostle woodenly from the town to country hamlets; the winsome, open smile and gay laughter of a peasant boy; the ingratiating charm of a sleeping baby in the noise of the market place. To know the average Haitian is to feel a warm affection for him. His life is never easy, yet he bears it all with true beauty of spirit. If *le bon Dieu* sends distress, he will also make it possible for distress to be borne.

The people are polite, whether to each other or to strangers. A younger person greets an older one as *compère* or *commère*—literally, godfather or godmother; to his equal he says "*frère*" or "*m'sieu*." Sometimes one sees a local patriarch instructing little children in "deportment." This courtesy extends to hospitality: a stranger is almost sure to be offered shelter and food wherever he stops.